

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 NEA-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00
INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 PM-04
NSC-05 SS-15 /085 W
-----190943 110239 /22

R 181610Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9408
INFO AMEMBASSY ACCRA
AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMCONSUL IBADAN
AMCONSUL KADUNA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 1971

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR: ET, SO, SU, FI
SUBJECT: SITUATION IN NORTHEAST AFRICA

REF: STATE 34960

1. NIGERIAN VIEW OF CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS IN ETHIOPIA AND NORTHEAST
AFRICA GENERALLY IS STRONGLY CONDITIONED BY FMG'S CONTINUING ADHERENCE

TO THE PRINCIPLE OF TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF OAU MEMBER STATES.
EXPERIENCE OF BIAFRAN SECESSION REINFORCES THIS POSITION AND IS
USED TO EXPLAIN NIGERIAN SUPPORT FOR ETHIOPIAN UNITY AND OPPO-
SITION TO SELF-DETERMINATION AS SOLUTION TO PROBLEM CASES SUCH AS
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ERITREA.

2. IN DISCUSSION WITH ACTING DIRECTOR MEA'S AFRICA DEPARTMENT
FEBRUARY 18, IT BECAME CLEAR THAT NIGERIANS HAVE NO DESIRE BE
FORCED TO CHOOSE BETWEEN ETHIOPIA ON THE ONE HAND AND SOMALIA
OR SUDAN ON THE OTHER EXCEPT IN SO FAR AS THEIR POSITION ON
TERITORIAL INTEGRITY PLACES THEM IN OPPOSITION TO THOSE WHOSE

ACTIONS SUPPORT THE DISMEMBERMENT OF ETHIOPIA.
NIGERIANS CLAIM THEY DO NOT RPT NOT SEE THE
SITUATION IN TERMS OF ARAB/AFRICAN OR MOSLEM/CHRISTIAN CONFLICT,
BUT RATHER VIEWS IT AS A SECESSIONIST MOVEMENT WHICH SOULD NOT
BE SUPPORTED BY ANY OAU MEMBER STATE. BY EXTENSION, OF COURSE,
THEIR STANCE PLACES FMG AT ODDS WITH ANY GOVERNMENT PORIVIDING
SUPPORT TO THE ERITREAN SEPARATISTS.

3. DJIBOUTI PROBLEM IS ONE TO BE DECIDED ON PRINCIPLE OF SELF-
DETERMINATION. FMG CLAIMS TO HAVE NO PREFERENCE FOR OUTCOME
BEYOND ASSURING THAT POPULATION HAS OPPORTUNITY DECIDE ITS OWN
FUTURE. SHOULD PEOPLE OPT FOR INCORPORATION INTO SOMALIA OR
ETHIOPIA, FMG WOULD ABIDE BY DECISION.

4. WHILE NOT DENYING THAT THERE IS SERIOUS TALK ABOUT MOVING
OAU HEADQUARTERS OUT OF ADDIS, ACTING DIRECTOR APPEARTED TO TRY
TO DEWONPLAY EXTENT OF SUPPORT FOR THE MOVE. HE SAID IT IS BEING
PUSHED ONLY BY SUDAN AND "A FEW OTHERS;" HE WOULD NOT BE DRAWN
OUT FURTHER ON THIS SUBJECT.

5. ALTHOUGH SOMEWHAT RETICENT TO DISCUSS THE SITUATION IN DETAIL,
THE OFFICIAL INDICATED THAT THE CONTINUING UNREST AND BLOODSHED
IN ETHIOPIA WOULD NOT AFFECT CONTINUED NIGERIAN SUPPORT FOR THE
COUNTRY'S TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OR FMG'S DETERMINATION NOT TO
INTERFERE IN THE NATION'S INTERNAL POLITICS.

6. WITH RESPECT TO THE U.U. RELATIONSHIP WITH ETHIOPIA AND OUR
PROVISION OF MILITARY MATERIAL TO CENTRAL GOVERNMENT, ACTING
DIRECTOR WAS UNCRITICAL. GIVEN PRESENT NIGERIAN SUPPORT FOR EFFORTS
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OF THE ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT TO MAINTAIN COUNTRY'S TERRITORIAL
INTEGRITY, WE WOULD NOT EXPECT FMG TO BE IN FOREFRONT OF ANY
MOVE TO CRITICIZE U.S. FOR PROVIDING SUPPORT TO THAT GOVERNMENT.

7. COMMENT: ACTING DIRECTOR GAVE IMPRESSION THAT FMG SOMEWHAT
UNEASY AND UNSURE OF WHAT ACTION TO TAKE IN CURRENT SITUATION
BEYOND REAFFIRMATION PRINCIPLE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REPORTS, TERRITORIAL UNIFICATION, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, POLITICAL SITUATION, SELFDETERMINATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 18-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977LAGOS01971
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770059-1163
Format: TEL
From: LAGOS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770228/aaaaaykg.tel
Line Count: 105
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 9da17cc4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 STATE 34960
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3283377
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SITUATION IN NORTHEAST AFRICA
TAGS: PFOR, ET, SO, SU, FI, NI, FT, OAU
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/9da17cc4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009